(c) the steps taken and being taken by Government to augment Indian defence to counter such arsenal and aircraft being supplied to Pakistan?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) According to information available, the US is to supply P-3C Orion maritime surveillance aircraft, Phalanx Close In Weapon Systems and TOW-2 anti-armour missiles to Pakistan. In addition, Government has been informed about the US intention to supply an unspecified number of F-16 fighter aircraft to Pakistan.

(c) Steps to counter such weapons and aircraft are being factored into the defence modernisation programmes of the Armed Forces through on-going acquisitions and upgradation of platforms and systems.

Reforms in Criminal Justice System

3607. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to carry out an extensive reforms in the system of Criminal Justice in India;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) by when the reforms process is likely to be initiated; and

(d) whether Government have carried out any consultation\dialogue with the Supreme Court of India, High Court, State Governments, Law Commission etc. all for effecting any meaningful reforms in this regard and if so the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI S. REGUPATHY): (a) to (d) The reforms in the Criminal Justice System in the country is a continuous process. The Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 and the Indian Penal Code, 1860 are being amended as and when need arises, on basis of the recommendations of the Law Commission of India or other special Committee set up for the purpose.

The Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Bill, 1994 which was intorduced in the Rajya Sabha is based on the recommendations made by the Law Commission, National Police Commission and other agencies. The thrust areas of the Bill are:—

(i) Toning up the investigative machinery and process;

(ii) Strengthening the prosecution and related machinery;

(III) Streamlining and improving procedures, especially from the point of view of expediting trial court procedures;

(iv) Tackling the problem of undertrials and matters connected with the grant of bail; and

(v) Effecting miscellaneous improvements.

The Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill, 2003, intorduced in the Rajya Sabha on 22nd August, 2003, has important proposals to provide punishment to those who threaten to give false evidence, introduction of the concept of plea bargaining, making the offence at Section 498A IPC of the Indian Penal Code, 1860 compoundable etc.

Apart from the above, the Malimath Committee on Reforms of Criminal Justice System in its report has recommended various changes to the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973, the Indian Penal Code, 1860 and other laws. The Crimanl Law and the Criminal Procedure are in the Concurrent List of the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution of India and they are administered by the State Governments. Therefore, before effecting major changes in these laws, consultations with State Governments are essential. Accordingly, the Report of the Malimath Committee was forwarded to the State Governments for their views. So far, views of eleven (11) State Governments and four (4) Union Territory Administrations have been received.

Separate Ministry for handling disaster-management

3608. SHRIMATI BIMBA RAIKAR: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the recent Tsunami disaster has exposed the nation's total unpreparedness and inability on disaster management;

(b) whether India with a long coastline and vast area with pockets prone to earth-quake needs to have a separate ministry to look after disaster